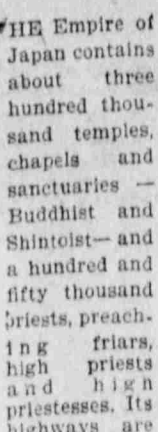


Translated for the Living Age From the
French of Andre Bellesort in Revue
des Deux Mondes.



but that the earth revolves
known it ever since. It has bent over
in a way whose surface the earth
can in a soft mass, like floating fat,
and began stirring it with their untir-
ing spears!" No one of the ancient
hegemonies. It may be admitted, ever
upon a finer symbol of
perpetual motion. Japan, the country
of the Japanese people are
children of the gods and as such they
have their share in the divine wisdom.
They know all things congenitally. The
difference between them and other na-
tions is not one of degree
The Shintoiists
the indigenous national val-
of the most beaming spirit of self-

Hence the fundamental rite of Shintoism was a system of hygiene. The endless purifications accompanying birth and following upon funerals are among the most consistent features of the most ancient religions. Salt is habitually scattered about a sick-chamber and over the persons of those returning from a burial. Salt is an expiatory antiseptic. Religious ablutions have transformed the salt-water bath into a holy bath. From the emperor down to the humblest kurumaya, every Jap takes his morning dip. Dirt, whether on the person or in the surroundings, is a stain; a mark of negligence and of unbecoming sacrilege. For all things are omnipresent and the word kami is applied not alone to creative divinities and the higher orders of men. The mountain is kami; the stormy sea is kami; the bird, the tree, the flower, the stone, which all had the gift of language in the early time, are

time to time, that the names of a gallant and a noble soldier and statesman, the emperor has conferred a higher rank on some deceased person whose son has distinguished himself. I have seen Europeans laughing over such things, but they would not think of doing so in the case of the emperor's ancestors: "If I write their history," they will descend from me!" Europeans have their own Pantheons [and the Catholics their saints], and do they not glorify in the names of their public protectors in bronze or marble?

The ancient legislators of Japan, who compelled children to pay the debts of their parents, were but incorporating in the civil code the moral law of Shintotism. And in those remote times when a man might sell himself without incurring any stigma, was it not for his personal liberty for laudable motives. It was nevertheless decreed that children selling themselves for

But though the doctrine of Confucius, once imported into Japan, was hailed as a religion, it never came speedily naturalized, for the very reason that the cult of the Shinto, so barren upon the speculative side, contained the germ of a kind of religious positivism. A menkyō-kudum was drawn up in the new articles of belief, but the Samurais of Japan, clinging heart and soul to the old Shintoist faith, were content to spell out its formulas from the Chinese bible.

But though Buddhism was easily and speedily naturalized among these vain and optimistic islanders, and came soon to overshadow their whole social life, there would have been something almost miraculous about the change, were it not that the Shinto is so closely allied to the evolution of a mystical philosophy by independent clerical casuists. The recalcitrant gods who barred the route of these innovators were

I doubt whether the Japanese have ever formally conceived of the universe as the outcome of a creative thought, or as the result of a process that leads to a degree inconceivable by our standards. The contemplation of the splendour of passing phenomena, the delicate brevity of life and the joy of being able to dwell in our own imaginings, as the swift world swirls away, are the things that have fascinated the Japanese. But the true meaning of the perpetual bliss we are upon the lips of the Japanese. He answered me by those two sayings which

"The incredible power of silence which the Japanese possess irradiates their self-renunciation with a sorrowful smile and infinitely prolongs each act of sacrifice. They devise exquisite agonies for their own souls, and dissimulate their sensibility as they do their material wealth. A European, married to a Japanese woman, had a little son who was simply adored by his wife's brother. The baby died, and the maternal uncle, who had gone the whole length of Tokyo daily to sit by its bedside, heard the sad tidings with a

(Continued on page twenty.)

A decorative illustration of a woman in a lace dress lying on a table, with a small inset image of a cross in the upper right corner. The entire scene is framed by ornate, swirling patterns. The woman is lying on her side, facing left, with her head resting on a small table. A small vase with a single flower sits on the table. A chair is visible in the background. The inset image shows a large cross in a landscape. The overall style is reminiscent of early 20th-century magazine illustrations.

ghosts are on the least like our spirits of darkness. If the Japanese mind has arrived at the conception of a certain dualism in nature it has never reached even the first and eternal. The Spirit of Perversity, the *Yak*, is called, are not seeking to compass the ruin of the living. They are even, in some sort, sacred, because their influence, though malign, is an element in the life of the world. The evil, the harmful exhalations of certain isolated tombs are carried off and rendered innocuous by that broadly beneficent spirit which is the breath of life in Japan.

Incense-burners in South America, a peasant's son who became rich and powerful and built himself a palatial

providence. Surrounded by a wonderful
 portrait. In the very center of the do-
 main, however, there was a poor little
 child, as if of an old woman's hand
 and span. It was the hut where the rich
 man was born, and the old woman was
 born, and the old woman was his mo-
 ther. And, in like manner, the Japane-
 se, despite the influx of Buddhist
 doctrine, still held the earth to be due
 to the gods of the soil their first lowly
 dwelling, which, though little better
 than a stable, is yet their traditional
 sanctuary. It is the sacred love of
 country which has been imposing these
 things upon the foreigner, and which, re-
 polished by the waves, this thatch
 grown in the glee. Sophists, confused
 by bad humanitarian dreams, have pro-
 ceeded that patriotism is an element of
 the human mind, and that, if it had
 it had it not I should be farther removed
 even than now from these men who are
 so alien to me in education and in race.
 Love of country is the great interpreter
 of hearts, and by this all comprehend
 one another.

CONFUCIUS AND BUDDHA.

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(Continued on page twenty.)